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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] This invention relates generally to the field of container coverings and, more specifically, to the field of trash can coverings.

BACKGROUND

~~[0001] Trash cans come with removable lids or tops. The purpose of the tops is to contain contents. During times of inelement weather such as high winds, hurricanes and thunder storms, the tops of trash cans sometimes get lost. Even on regular trash pickup days, workers from the Sanitation department are not very careful about replacing the tops on the trash cans or even putting them back in their rightful place. The tops get thrown into other yards or even left in the street where they get run over by cars and get too damaged to be used again.~~

~~[0002] Not having a trash can top can cause many problems. In windy weather trash cans get blown over and the contents get blown all around the neighborhood causing a real mess. Birds and other animals get into trash cans that are not covered dropping the contents all over the ground. Sometimes very hungry and dangerous animals are lured to topless trash cans. In hot climates trash cans with no lids cause Insect infestations and high bacterial growth as well as the awful odors that come with~~

~~it. This can become costly to the consumer even to the point of receiving citations from their local government for sanitation violations.~~

~~[0003] Most consumers would not immediately replace a trash can simply because the lid has been lost. Having to buy a new trash can become a waste of money when the lid is the only thing that is missing and the trash can is still functional.~~

~~[0004] All of the problems of not having a trash can top would be totally eliminated with the use of a "disposable plastic trash can top". No longer would there ever have to be an uncovered trash can. The lost trash can top can be replaced by my invention. No longer would consumers have to spend or waste money to replace a trash can just because the lid is missing. Consumers would more likely cover their trash cans rather than to leave them uncovered because of their reluctance to buy another trash can. Another advantage in using the "disposable plastic trash can tops" is that It's more sanitary because it's changeable and is thrown right out with the trash. No more having to clean and wash the lids and the sanitation workers won't have to handle those dirty lids~~

[0002] It is generally well known that trash container and receptacles, specifically those which a user would leave outside of their home, have lids or coverings. These lids and coverings typically act to serve a variety of purposes. First, the

covering seeks to prevent potentially offensive odors from escaping the trash container. These odors are not only unpleasant to smell, but may also attract local wildlife, such as squirrels and raccoons, who may attempt to access the trash in the container and use it as a source of food. The lid thus serves the additional function of preventing wildlife from accessing the garbage housed in the container. Further, the lid or covering can act to prevent the elements from reaching the contents of the container. The lid prevents rain water from entering the container, which could cause further spoilage of the refuse as well as potentially filling the container with undesired water, which could also add weight to the container, rendering it more difficult to move or lift.

[0003] Traditional trash container lids have a variety of problems, however. Lids are susceptible to being broken or removed, rendering them non-functional for their intended task. A problem exists when a gust of wind, for example, blows a trash container over, removing the lid in the process. The lid may also be displace by a wild animal searching for food or may not be properly replaced by trash removal personnel. Thus the trash container can be left without a lid and the refuse it houses is left open to both wildlife and the elements.

[0004] A further problem with traditional trash container lids is that once they are removed from the container, they

frequently become lost or otherwise unusable, it is difficult to obtain a replacement. When a lid is removed from a container by a gust of wind or otherwise, it is often blown a distance from the container, making it difficult for the owner of the container to locate. Additionally, due to the prevalence of lids being lost and the uniformity of size of most garbage containers, other people who find a displaced lid often keep it for use on their own trash containers.

[0005] The problem of losing a trash container lid or covering is further exacerbated for the original owner of the trash container due to the difficulty in obtaining a replacement lid. Because lids and containers are typically sold together, an individual seeking to obtain a replacement lid must either purchase a new trash can and lid combination or forgo the use of a lid. It is usually undesirable to purchase a new container and lid due to the fact that the buyer will then have an extra trash can without a lid. Otherwise, if the person chooses to not purchase a replacement trash container and lid, they will be forced to leave their refuse open to the elements and wildlife, which is an undesirable situation for both the owner of the open container and potentially for their neighbors.

SUMMARY

~~[0005] Because of the very nature of trash and especially garbage, there will always be the necessity to dispose of it. Because of the natural decomposing process which occurs, garbage has to be placed in a container (trash can) and should be covered properly for all the reasons stated previously. The pungent odors from bacterial contamination, infestation of insects which can cause horrendous consequences, the luring of animals searching for food and many more problems occur by simply not having a trash can covered.~~

~~[0006] So many times for the many reasons mentioned before, trash can tops get lost and the trash is left exposed and uncovered creating many problems. With the use of my "plastic disposable trash can top", consumers can always keep their trash covered. If the lid gets blown away or damaged, cover it with my invention. It would not be expensive and has very necessary and practical uses. The plastic itself keeps any odors from getting into the atmosphere. It really aids in keeping the neighborhoods clean and sanitary. These can also be used by the Sanitation department in which they can cover the public trash cans when they get too full. This would deter citizens from trying to stuff trash in trash cans where there is no more space. Consequently, this will prevent trash from getting all over the streets which could result in less cost to the local government.~~

~~[0007] This invention has a myriad of uses wherever there is a need to protect or cover a surface and not just in times of bad weather or from the outside elements. Surfaces such as wall pictures or small table tops etc. may need to be covered during painting projects or certain types of indoor treatments.~~

~~[0008] This invention is something that should be in every home and business, especially restaurants. Having a product like this would encourage a desire for a better and cleaner environment.~~

[0006] In one embodiment of the invention, a plastic cover having an elastic band positioned at the bottom of the cover is used to cover an open container. The cover may be used to cover and seal such containers as trashcans or any other open object. Further, due to the elastic band in the cover, the cover may be used to protect other items from outside elements.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0007] Embodiments of the present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description and the accompanying drawings, wherein:

[0008] Fig. 1 is a collapsed view of a container cover.

[0009] Fig. 2 is an expanded view of a container cover.

[0010] Fig. 3 is an inverted view of a container cover.

[0011] Fig. 4 is an exemplary diagram of a container cover on a cylindrical trash can.

[0012] Fig. 5 is an exemplary diagram of a container cover on a square-shaped trash can.

[0013] Fig. 6 is an exemplary diagram of a container cover on a bush.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

~~[0009] The "DispoTop" is made of poly ethylene sheets of plastic and elastic cord to make a multi-sizeable, multi-shapeable and multi-usable product with the ability to hold snugly to the container or item to be covered.~~

~~[0010] The invention's name comes from the purpose for which it was invented, "plastic disposable trash can top". The plastic protects whatever needs to be protected and covers whatever needs to be covered. The elastic around the bottom provides the security to hold, whereas the convertional trash can could not and does not provide. The conventional trash can holds the lids by clamps on two sides of the trash can.~~

~~[0011] The inexpensive materials used to produce this invention makes the cost of the product more affordable than replacing a conventional trash can simply because of a missing or lost top. The "DispoTop" also keeps the consumer in compliance with environmental and sanitation regulations. Many times because of the expense of buying a trash can only to replace a top~~

~~discourages citizens and causes them to disobey their sanitation laws and leave their trash uncovered.~~

~~[0012] Through the years, my own trash can lids have gotten lost, taken or blown away after a storm or for whatever reason and I have been in those many situations where my own trash has gone uncovered for months or more or until the trash can itself needs to be replaced. I have never found anything or the likes of anything to get me through those times. This is how I thought of a way to fix these problems. These tops can be replaced over and over for a very low cost and for this there is incentive for its use. Simply stretch the open elastic bottom over the trash can. If for some reason the top would have to be removed, pull the gathered fan-like top in the middle of the cover.~~

~~[0013] For those times that certain items of charity have to be left out at curbside and the weather does not cooperate with these boxed items, having a plastic cover with an elastic bottom would come in real handy. My invention would be ideal for this use.~~

~~DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT~~

~~[0014] The plastic disposable trash can tops or "DispoTops" are made with two sheets of 2.0 mil polyethylene plastic, approximately 36-40 inches in width and 18-24 Inches In height. A one inch hem is heat sealed along the bottom of both sheets.~~

~~The two sheets are placed together and heat sealed along the sides to make one item. The top is then gathered by making 2 inch folds in an alternate pattern. Each fold is heat sealed to hold the top together. The fold top is approximately 2.5 inches from the sealed portion. The gathered folds provides a handle. Insert into the hem an 11-12 inch piece of elastic cord <2 mm in diameter on each side of the sheets. Stretch to capacity and heat seal the ends of the cord to the hems on each side. This should stretch to approximately 40 inches around, allowing a variety of sizes and shapes of containers to be covered. The 18-20 inch depth allows for overflow of contents that may be within the container. The "disposable trash can top" could be used for trash cans ranging in various sizes, from small, medium to large.~~

[0014] Aspects of the invention are disclosed in the following description and related drawings directed to specific embodiments of the invention. Alternate embodiments may be devised without departing from the spirit or the scope of the invention. Additionally, well-known elements of exemplary embodiments of the invention will not be described in detail or will be omitted so as not to obscure the relevant details of the invention. Further, to facilitate an understanding of the description, discussion of several terms used herein follows.

[0015] The word "exemplary" is used herein to mean "serving as an example, instance, or illustration." Any embodiment described herein as "exemplary" is not necessarily to be construed as preferred or advantageous over other embodiments. Likewise, the term "embodiments of the invention" does not require that all embodiments of the invention include the discussed feature, advantage or mode of operation.

[0016] Referring generally to Figs. 1-6, a disposable plastic cover is disclosed. The covering may be utilized in any of a variety of functions, such as closing and temporarily sealing containers.

[0017] Fig. 1 shows a collapsed view of a disposable plastic cover 2. Because cover 2 may be formed of a variety of plastics, it may be stored in a small box or container. Additionally, cover 2 is formed so as to be stored in a collapsed manner with many other covers of the same type. Cover 2 may further have elastic band 4 located at a bottom portion of the cover. Elastic band 4 can be expandable, for example, up to about 1020mm in order to fit over containers having openings of up to about 1020mm. Cover 2 also has an area where two plastic sheets may be joined or sealed together to form handle 6, which may act as a handle for a user who desired to remove cover 2 from a container. Additionally, the area where two plastic sheets may be joined or sealed together to form handle 6 further

acts to seal one side of cover 2 so as to prevent any solids, liquids or gases from escaping through cover 2 when it is being used to seal and cover a container.

[0018] In a further embodiment, cover 2 may be made of polyethylene sheets of plastic. Additionally, elastic band 4 made be made of any multi-sizeable, multi-shapeable band or cord having the ability to hold snugly to a container or item to be covered. Additionally, the plastic formation of the covers may allow a large number of them to be packaged together for sale and provides easy storage capabilities for covers that are not in use.

[0019] In yet a further embodiment, cover 2 may be made with two sheets of about 2.0mm polyethylene plastic, about 910mm to 1020mm in width and about 450mm to 610mm in height. An about 25mm hem can be heat sealed along the bottom of both sheets. The two sheets can be placed together and heat sealed along the sides to make one item. The top can then be gathered by making 50mm folds in an alternate pattern. Each fold can heat sealed to hold the top together. The folded top can be about 64mm from the sealed portion. The gathered folds may be formed so as to provide a handle which a user may utilize in any of a variety of manners. Inserted into the hem may be elastic cord 4 which can be a 280mm to 305mm piece of elastic cord less than 2mm in diameter on each side of the sheets. Elastic cord 4 may be

stretched to its full elasticity and heat sealed at the ends of the cord and to the hems on each side of the cover. The elastic cord may stretch to about 1020mm around, allowing a variety of sizes and shapes of containers to be covered. The about 450mm to 510mm depth can allow for overflow of contents that may be within the container. Thus, cover 2 may be used for trash cans ranging in various sizes, from small, medium to large.

[0020] Fig. 2 shows an inverted and expanded view of cover 2. Here, elastic band 2 is shown in its expanded form where it could be fitted over the open top of a container. Fig. 3 is an inverted view of Fig. 2, where elastic band 4 is expanded and the folded area is shown in the upward fashion so that it could be used as a handle 6 to remove cover 2 from a container.

[0021] Fig. 4 shows an exemplary embodiment where cover 2 is disposed on cylindrical trash container 8. In this embodiment a user may grasp cover 2 and expand the bottom portion of the cover using elastic band 4. The elasticity of elastic band 4 allows it to fit over the open portion of trash container 8. Additionally, after elastic band 4 of cover 2 is placed over the opening of trash container 8, elastic band 4 contracts and acts as a seal between outside elements and the interior contents of trash container 8.

[0022] Fig. 5 is another embodiment of the invention where cover 2 may be utilized to cover alternative shapes and contents

of a container. In this embodiment a square-shaped trash container 10 is shown. Trash container 10 is filled with items that extend beyond the brim of the trash container. Cover 2, however, may still be used to cover trash container 10. Elastic band 4 of cover 2 may be used to form a seal around the square-shaped opening of trash container 10. Additionally, due to the size and pliable nature of cover 2, the contents of trash container 10 which extend beyond the brim of the container may still be fully covered, sealing in the contents of the container and preventing outside elements from reaching the contents of the container. In a further embodiment of the invention, cover 2 may be adapted to fit over any size or shape container that is within the elasticity limits of elastic band 4. Further, cover 2 may fit over any objects protruding from a container provided that the objects do not protrude higher than the maximum height of cover 2 that allows elastic band 4 to be secured around an upper portion of a container.

[0023] Fig. 6 shows a further embodiment of the invention where cover 2 may be used to cover shrubbery or bushes, for example, when a frost is imminent or when they may otherwise need to be covered. Additionally, in other embodiments of the invention, cover 2 may be used to cover other household items that require protection. For example, cover 2 may be used to

cover framed paintings and portraits in a house or on a wall when a house is being painted.

[0024] The foregoing description and accompanying drawings illustrate the principles, preferred embodiments and modes of operation of the invention. However, the invention should not be construed as being limited to the particular embodiments discussed above. Additional variations of the embodiments discussed above will be appreciated by those skilled in the art.

[0025] Therefore, the above-described embodiments should be regarded as illustrative rather than restrictive. Accordingly, it should be appreciated that variations to those embodiments can be made by those skilled in the art without departing from the scope of the invention as defined by the following claims.